What happens when a Planning Application is submitted?

It goes through 4 key stages:

1. **Validation.** Once received, our technical support team will check the application to make sure everything that is required is submitted. If everything has been received that is needed, the application is registered as 'valid.' If not, our technical support team will let the agent or applicant know what is missing so they can send it to us. An applicant often uses an agent when submitting an application, and if so all communications are through the agent.

2. **Consultation.** Once an application is 'valid', we consult with neighbours affected by the proposals, along with 'statutory bodies' such as the Environment Agency if this is relevant. We might also advertise the application if required by legislation. Anyone can comment and 21 days are allowed for comments to be received; any received after this date may not be taken into account.

3. **Determination.** The application is passed to a planning officer, who will consider factors such as policy, the location, impact of the proposal on neighbours, comments from consultees, design and impact. This process takes 8 to 13 weeks, depending on application type. During this process, there can be various negotiating and discussions taking place. The planning officer will then write a report with a recommendation whether to approve or refuse the application.

4. **Decision.** There are two ways the decision can be made. Sometimes an officer will make the final decision, or the Planning Committee (made up of elected Councillors) will make the final decision - this is set out in Fenland's constitution. Once a decision is reached, the decision is sent to the agent or applicant.